

Ari B. Teman

The Honorable Judge Paul Engelmayer
Southern District of New York
40 Foley Square
New York, NY 10007

April 28, 2022
Nisan 27, 5782

Re: Reply to Government's Opposition to Motion to Travel to my Mother and Perform Comedy in Israel

Your Honor,

The Government's objections do not make sense in light of their agreeing to allow me to travel for more than a month to Australia. The supervising officers can video chat with me in Tel Aviv just as easily as in Melbourne, in fact the time-zone difference is much easier, and they can verify my location just the same by seeing what's in the background. Like Australia, Israel extradites and will not grant citizenship to someone with an ongoing criminal case. Having family there doesn't make a difference -- I am not a citizen and they will drag me onto a plane and back to the USA.

The Government has already conceded that I am not a threat to the community and not a flight risk, and I returned from Melbourne as required.

I have complied with all bond conditions, which I have not violated at any time.

My mother is unwell. Her younger brother already passed at a young age. I am her only son. She is of course the only mother I have. If she were to not survive surgery or recovery that would be a devastating and permanent punishment for a case where many experts suggest there are strong grounds for appeal, as even Your Honor conceded in granting bond.

The appeal was delayed, as appellate counsel noted in their filings, due to COVID-19 requiring them to care for their children and making it difficult to complete their work on time. As a result, they were replaced with someone without young children who can get the job done. I obviously had no role in causing COVID-19 childcare needs such as at-home schooling and to blame me for those delays is disingenuous. Moreover, counsel's need for additional time is irrelevant to my application.

It is also offensive to object to my request to be with my mother at this difficult time because I am "erratic." The basis for this accusation is my motion to have my sentence modified in light of my grief over a lost child. My grief is genuine as is my belief that the loss of the child should be taken into consideration in a reduction of my sentence to what amounts to time served. Mr. Bhatia can perhaps criticize my writing style or even the merits of my motions, but to use that as a pretext to oppose a humanitarian application to be with my mother during and after life-threatening surgery shows a degree of callousness I hope and pray the Court does not share. Mr. Bhattia's ad hominem attack on me is also irrelevant. Whatever the merits of any motions I have made, this has nothing to do with whether I am somehow a greater flight risk in Israel than in Australia.

All my closest friends are in the United States. All my business affairs are in the United States. I have several lawsuits pending, including a claim against Amazon that alleges multi-million dollar damages.

I believe my pending appeal is strong and that I will prevail. I would lose everything if I were to try to become a fugitive in Israel and live a life on the run. It would make no sense to walk away from everything.

I have appeared for every court date, abided by every condition of my release, stayed in constant contact with my supervising officers who have never, to my knowledge, lodged any complaints about me or my compliance with my bail conditions.

I have only one mother, and she has only one son. If she passes before I win the appeal or do my time, it will be devastating for her and my father and me. If I win my appeal, such a cost incurred is unjust and indefensible. Even if I lose the appeal, the loss of a chance to see my mother now would be a potentially far, far greater loss, out of all proportion to this case.

I hope Your Honor will allow me to be with my mother during this difficult time for our family. I promise by everything I hold sacred that I will return to face my fate whatever that may be. Mr. Quainton assisted me in writing this letter.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature consisting of a stylized, wavy line that loops back on itself, resembling a 'W' or a signature mark.

Ari